

The Relationship between Iranian EFL Students' Knowledge of Farsi Grammar and their English Grammar Knowledge

Farhad Hajimirzayee, Mahdi Kiani Sheikh Abadi

Science and Research branch, Islamic Azad university of Mazandaran, Iran

Abstract

This study specifically intended to investigate the correlation between Farsi grammar knowledge and English grammar knowledge in relation to students' English language proficiency, age, gender, and linguistic intelligence. The study was conducted with 16 male and 19 female English literature undergraduate students studying at the Foreign Languages Department of state University of Qom, Iran. In this study, one questionnaire and three different tests were administered: a 20-item linguistic intelligence questionnaire in Likert scale model based on Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory, a 50-item Nelson Proficiency Test by which the participants were divided into two groups; „high“ and „low“ proficient, a 22-item multiple-choice test of Farsi grammar knowledge, and a 22-item multiple-choice test of English grammar knowledge. After scoring, some Pearson and Spearman Correlation Coefficient tests were run through SPSS software to investigate the relationship between Farsi and English grammar knowledge, and the relationships between grammar knowledge and English language proficiency, age, and linguistic intelligence. Also, an Independent-Samples T-Test was run to investigate sex differences in terms of L1/L2 grammar knowledge.

Finally, it was concluded that: 1. Generally, without considering any other variables, Farsi grammar knowledge and English grammar knowledge are strongly correlated with each other. 2. English language proficiency is correlated with neither English nor Farsi grammar knowledge in none of the groups, i.e. low and high proficient. 3. Linguistic intelligence is significantly correlated with both English and Farsi grammar knowledge. 4. Participants' age is not significantly correlated with either English or Farsi grammar knowledge. 5. Males and females are not significantly different with each other in either English or Farsi grammar knowledge.

Keywords: Grammar knowledge, Language proficiency, Linguistic intelligence

I. Introduction

Instead of focusing on the differences between students' first and second languages, researchers investigating the role of first language in second language acquisition have turned their attention to the degree that the first language can facilitate the acquisition of the second

language (Sadighi, 2010). By referring to the current theories of second language acquisition and reviewing the recent literature, it can be seen that the first language of learners (L1) has a necessary and facilitating role in all aspects of language instruction and learning (Nazary, 2008). Accordingly, improving EFL students' first language skills will promote their second language learning and proficiency.

Here, a specific factor to be estimated would be “linguistic intelligence”. According to Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence theory, there is a wide range of cognitive abilities, and that there are only very weak correlations between these (Gardner, 1993). People with high verbal-linguistic intelligence display a facility with words and languages. They are typically good at reading, writing, telling stories and memorizing words along with dates. They tend to learn best by reading, taking notes, listening to lectures, and by discussing and debating about what they have learned (Gardner, 1993). Those with verbal-linguistic intelligence learn foreign languages very easily as they have high verbal memory and recall, and an ability to understand and manipulate syntax and structure (Gardner, 1993).

In this research, it is intended to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL students' knowledge of Farsi grammar and their English grammar knowledge. In other words, we want to know if Farsi grammar knowledge of students has any influence on their English grammar knowledge. Also, it is planned to compute their linguistic intelligence, based on Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence theory, and estimate its relationship with their L1 and L2 grammar knowledge.

Cummins's (1979) Developmental Interdependence hypothesis states that learner's competence in a second language is partly dependent on the level of competence already achieved in the first language. He argues that certain first language (L1) knowledge can be positively transferred during the process of second language (L2) acquisition. Likewise, the Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) model of bilingualism (Cummins, 1980) suggests that a bilingual/multilingual person's thoughts that accompany reading, writing, talking, and listening stem from a common underlying proficiency or central operating system. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is one integrated source of thought, without considering the language in which the bilingual/multilingual person is functioning. In the CUP model, experience with either language can, theoretically, promote the development of the proficiency underlying both languages, given adequate motivation and exposure to both, either in school or wider environment (Cummins, 1980). This theory also serves to explain why it becomes easier and easier to learn additional languages.

Gardner (1983) suggested that all individuals have personal intelligence profiles that consist of combinations of seven different intelligence types. In 1999, Gardner added an eighth intelligence type to the list; that is, natural intelligence. Moreover, two years later a ninth type, namely existential intelligence, was added to the list. Gardner has described Linguistic intelligence as sensitivity to spoken and written language and the ability to use language to accomplish goals, as well as the ability to learn new languages. According to Gardner (1993), lawyers, public speakers, writers, and poets all possess high levels of linguistic intelligence. Linguistic intelligence consists of verbal comprehension and word fluency. Verbal comprehension involves the ability to understand the meanings of both individual words and passages of written or spoken texts. Word fluency, in contrast, involves the ability to generate rapidly many examples of words that meet some specification (e.g., words beginning with a given letter, words rhyming with a target word, words naming objects that have some property, etc.) (Razmjoo, 2008).

As an EFL teacher, the present researcher has seen a lot of EFL students who are low proficient in English grammar, even after two or three years of studying English! As it was focused on this matter, it was found that most of these students are weak in their L1 (Farsi) grammar, too. Most of them do not know even the basic grammatical concepts in their first language such as subject, object, parts of speech features, etc. On the other hand, as the present researcher has experienced, the students who are accurate and knowledgeable in their L1 grammar are more successful in learning L2 grammar in comparison to others.

In this study, it is specifically intended to investigate the correlation between Farsi grammar knowledge and English grammar knowledge in relation to students' English language proficiency, age, gender, and linguistic intelligence.

If there is any relationship, according to Chomsky's Universal Grammar and Cummins's Developmental Interdependence hypothesis, it is assumed that it is better to work on and improve students' L1 (Farsi) grammar knowledge as they are taught English.

This study has formulated the following questions:

- 1- Is there any relationship between Farsi and English grammar knowledge?
- 2- Is there any relationship between English language proficiency level and Farsi/English grammar knowledge?
- 3- Is there any relationship between linguistic intelligence and Farsi/English grammar knowledge?

4- Is there any relationship between age and Farsi/English grammar knowledge?

5- Are males and females different in terms of Farsi/English grammar knowledge?

II. Methodology

This study has been conducted with 16 male and 19 female English literature undergraduate students studying at the Foreign Languages Department of state University of Qom, Iran. They were chosen based on availability and convenient sampling.

In this study have been used three different tests and one questionnaire:

- 1- A Likert scale linguistic intelligence questionnaire based on Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory (Gardner, 1993). It contained 20 related questions. It has been devised by Chislett MSc and Chapman (2005). (Appendix A)
- 2- An appropriate version of Nelson Proficiency Test which was taken from a related previous study (Parvaresh & Nemati, 2008). This is a 50-item test that was used in order to explore the participants' English language proficiency and also to divide them into two groups; 'high' and 'low' in terms of their language proficiency. This multiple-choice test comprised cloze passages, vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation. (Appendix B)
- 3- A 22-item multiple-choice test of Farsi grammar that was devised by the present researcher according to the purpose of the study to investigate Farsi grammar knowledge, e.g. parts of speech features and functions, transitive/intransitive, etc. In order to have a reliable test of grammar, at the piloting stage the test was given to 25 students. Its reliability through the K-R21 formula turned out to be about . 55. After piloting, item facility and item discrimination were computed in order to moderate the items, i.e. remove very hard/very easy items. Finally, the possible and needed alterations, in form and content of the items, were made. The content and construct validity of the test were approved by 7 experienced linguistics professors in the Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics at University of Qom and Arak.
- 4- A 22-item multiple-choice test of English grammar that the researcher devised similar to the Farsi test in content according to the purpose of the study to investigate English grammar knowledge. In order to have a reliable test of grammar, at the piloting stage the test was given to 25 students. Its reliability through the K-R21 formula turned out to be about. 62. After piloting, item facility and item discrimination were computed in order to moderate the items, i.e. remove very hard/very easy items. Finally, the possible and

needed alterations, in form and content of the items, were made. The content and construct validity of the test were approved by 7 experienced linguistics professors in the Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics at University of Qom.

Because of the great number of tests and items, it was going to be boring if all of them had been administered at once. So, the data were collected in two separate sessions:

In the first session, the researcher gave a very brief introduction of the study and appreciated participants' contribution. Then, the Nelson proficiency test was administered. Also, the participants were asked to write their age, gender, and specific number in determined spaces-It was needed to number their papers because there were three other administrations. This, totally, took about 35 minutes. After all students finished, the researcher collected the papers and gave them the linguistic intelligence questionnaire that took about 10 minutes to answer.

In the second session, one week after the first administration, the other materials, both the English and Farsi grammar knowledge tests, were administered; Farsi first, and then English. They took about 40 minutes (20 minutes for each one) to answer.

During all administrations the present researcher carefully supervised and controlled the students' performance in order to prevent them from cheating. He guided them whenever it was necessary.

After the required data were collected, based on Nelson proficiency test results, the participants were categorized into two groups: high and low proficiency. Then, all variables, i.e., English proficiency levels, linguistic intelligence, age, and gender, were discussed in terms of L1/L2 grammar knowledge. Accordingly, some Correlation Coefficient tests are run through SPSS software, version 19. The researcher ran Correlation Coefficient in order to investigate the relationship between L1 and L2 grammar knowledge, the relationship between English language proficiency level and L1/L2 grammar knowledge, the relationship between linguistic intelligence and L1/L2 grammar knowledge, and the relationship between age and L1/L2 grammar knowledge. Finally, the researcher will run an Independent-Samples T-Test to investigate the males and females difference in terms of L1/L2 grammar knowledge. All the results are discussed according to critical alpha level of .05. Also, some necessary graphs and related tables will be presented.

III. Results

In this part, each hypothesis is going to be tested, one by one, and results will be discussed in detail. Also, related tables and graphs are presented.

1.Hypothesis One: There is no Relationship between Farsi and English Grammar Knowledge.

1.1. The statistical information of Farsi grammar knowledge scores

At first, Frequencies was run to get primary statistical information about the sample and data. In Farsi grammar knowledge scores, the minimum score is 6 and the maximum score=16. So, the range equals 10 (16-6). The mean is 11.47, the median=12, and the mode=12. So, the most frequent score is 12 (with 9 frequencies) which its cumulative frequency is 68.6%, i.e. about 68 percent of scores are equal or less than 12. It is shown in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1. Statistics

Farsi Grammar Knowledge		
N	Valid	35
	Missing	0
Mean		11.4857
Median		12.0000
Mode		12.00
Std. Deviation		2.31836
Variance		5.375
Range		10.00
Minimum		6.00
Maximum		16.00

Table 2. Farsi Grammar Knowledge

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
6.00	1	2.9	2.9	2.9
8.00	3	8.6	8.6	11.4
9.00	4	11.4	11.4	22.9
10.00	3	8.6	8.6	31.4
11.00	4	11.4	11.4	42.9
12.00	9	25.7	25.7	68.6
13.00	5	14.3	14.3	82.9
14.00	2	5.7	5.7	88.6
15.00	3	8.6	8.6	97.1
16.00	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	35	100.0	100.0	

1.2.The statistical information of English grammar knowledge scores

In English grammar knowledge scores the minimum score is 5 and the maximum score=18. So, the range equals 13 (18-5). The mean is 12.11, the median=12, and the mode=11. So, the most frequent score is 11 (with 7 frequencies) which its cumulative frequency is 45.7%, i.e. about 45 percent of scores are equal or less than 11. It is shown in Table 3 and 4.

Table 3. Statistics
 English Grammar knowledge

N	Valid	35
	Missing	0
Mean		12.1143
Median		12.0000
Mode		11.00
Std. Deviation		2.79465
Variance		7.810
Range		13.00
Minimum		5.00
Maximum		18.00

Table 4.
 English Grammar knowledge

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
5.00	1	2.9	2.9	2.9
8.00	2	5.7	5.7	8.6
9.00	3	8.6	8.6	17.1
10.00	3	8.6	8.6	25.7
11.00	7	20.0	20.0	45.7
12.00	5	14.3	14.3	60.0
14.00	6	17.1	17.1	77.1
15.00	6	17.1	17.1	94.3
17.00	1	2.9	2.9	97.1
18.00	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	35	100.0	100.0	

1.3. Testing hypothesis 1

After violating the normality of the both groups of scores, Farsi and English grammar knowledge, Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was run to investigate the relationship between L1 and L2 grammar knowledge scores. The correlation is .483 and it is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) (Table 5). So, *the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e.* there is a significant relationship between L1 and L2 grammar knowledge.

Table 5. Correlations between Farsi and English grammar knowledge

			English Grammar knowledge	Farsi Grammar Knowledge
Spearman's rho	English Grammar knowledge	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.483**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.003
		N	35	35

Farsi Grammar Knowledge	Correlation Coefficient	.483**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.
	N	35	35

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

2. Hypothesis Two: There is no Relationship between English Language Proficiency Level and L1/L2 Grammar Knowledge.

2.1. The statistical information of English proficiency scores

Frequencies were run to get primary statistical information about the proficiency scores: the minimum score is 14 and the maximum score=42. So, the range equals 28 (42-14). The mean is 31.74, the median=32, and the modes are 28 and 35. So, the most frequent scores are 28 and 35 (with 5 frequencies) which their cumulative frequencies are 37.1%, i.e. about 37 percent of scores are equal or less than 28, and 68.6%, i.e. about 68 percent of scores are equal or less than 35. It is shown in Table 6 and 7.

Table 6. Statistics: English Proficiency

N	Valid	35
	Missing	0
	Mean	31.7429
	Median	32.0000
	Mode	28.00 ^a
	Range	28.00
	Minimum	14.00
	Maximum	42.00

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Table 7. English Proficiency

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	14.00	1	2.9	2.9	2.9
	21.00	1	2.9	2.9	5.7
	23.00	1	2.9	2.9	8.6
	24.00	1	2.9	2.9	11.4
	25.00	1	2.9	2.9	14.3
	26.00	1	2.9	2.9	17.1
	27.00	2	5.7	5.7	22.9
	28.00	5	14.3	14.3	37.1
	29.00	1	2.9	2.9	40.0
	30.00	2	5.7	5.7	45.7
	32.00	2	5.7	5.7	51.4
	34.00	1	2.9	2.9	54.3
	35.00	5	14.3	14.3	68.6
	37.00	4	11.4	11.4	80.0
	38.00	3	8.6	8.6	88.6
	39.00	2	5.7	5.7	94.3
	40.00	1	2.9	2.9	97.1
	42.00	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total		35	100.0	100.0	

2.2. Testing hypothesis 2

After violating the normality of the English proficiency scores, based on median=32 and mean=31.74, the participants were divided into two groups: low and high proficiency. The one whose score was 32 or lower was put into low proficiency group, and the one whose score was upper than 32 was put into high proficiency group.

Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was run to investigate the relationship between Farsi grammar knowledge and English proficiency totally. It was concluded that there is

no significant correlation (-.054) at the 0.05 level (2-tailed (Table 8)). So, *there is no significant relationship between Farsi grammar knowledge and English proficiency totally.*

Table 8. Correlations between Farsi Grammar Knowledge and English Proficiency

			Farsi Grammar Knowledge	English Proficiency
Spearman's rho	Farsi Grammar Knowledge	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.054
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.756
		N	35	35
	English Proficiency	Correlation Coefficient	-.054	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.756	.
		N	35	35

3. Hypothesis Three: There is no Relationship between Linguistic Intelligence and L1/L2 Grammar Knowledge.

3.1. Statistical information of linguistic intelligence scores

Frequencies were run to get primary statistical information about the linguistic intelligence scores: the minimum score is 57 and the maximum score=86. So, the range equals 29 (86-57). The mean is 70.65, the median=71, and the mode=73. So, the most frequent score is 73 which its cumulative frequency is 74.3%, i.e. about 74 percent of scores are equal or less than 73. It is shown in Table 9 and 10.

Table 4.3.1. Statistical information of linguistic intelligence scores

N Valid	35
Missing	0
Mean	70.6571
Median	71.0000
Mode	73.00
Range	29.00
Minimum	57.00
Maximum	86.00

Table 10. Statistical information of linguistic intelligence scores

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	57.00	1	2.9	2.9	2.9
	58.00	2	5.7	5.7	8.6
	59.00	1	2.9	2.9	11.4
	61.00	1	2.9	2.9	14.3
	64.00	1	2.9	2.9	17.1
	65.00	3	8.6	8.6	25.7
	66.00	1	2.9	2.9	28.6
	67.00	1	2.9	2.9	31.4
	68.00	1	2.9	2.9	34.3
	69.00	2	5.7	5.7	40.0
	70.00	3	8.6	8.6	48.6
	71.00	2	5.7	5.7	54.3
	72.00	1	2.9	2.9	57.1
	73.00	6	17.1	17.1	74.3
	75.00	1	2.9	2.9	77.1
	76.00	2	5.7	5.7	82.9
	78.00	1	2.9	2.9	85.7
	79.00	1	2.9	2.9	88.6
	82.00	2	5.7	5.7	94.3
	86.00	2	5.7	5.7	100.0
Total		35	100.0	100.0	

3.2. Testing hypothesis 3

Linguistic intelligence Scores were normally distributed, but English and Farsi grammar knowledge scores were not normally distributed. So, it was necessary to run Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient as a nonparametric correlation test. So, the researcher ran two different correlation coefficient tests in order for investigating:

- 1- The correlation between linguistic intelligence and Farsi grammar knowledge.

2- The correlation between linguistic intelligence and English grammar knowledge.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient is run to investigate the relationship between Farsi grammar knowledge and linguistic intelligence. It was concluded that there is significant correlation (.449) at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), because sig. 0.007 is less than alpha level 0.01 (Table 11). So, *there is significant relationship between Farsi grammar knowledge and linguistic intelligence.*

Table 11. Correlations between linguistic intelligence and Farsi grammar knowledge

		Linguistic Intelligence	Farsi Grammar Knowledge
Linguistic Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.446**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
	N	35	35
Farsi Grammar Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	.446**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
	N	35	35

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was run to investigate the relationship between English grammar knowledge and linguistic intelligence. It was concluded that there is significant correlation (.352) at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) (Table 12). So, *there is significant relationship between English grammar knowledge and linguistic intelligence.*

Table 12. Correlations between linguistic intelligence and English grammar knowledge

			Linguistic Intelligence	English Grammar knowledge
Spearman's rho	Linguistic Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.352 ⁺
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.038
		N	35	35
	English Grammar knowledge	Correlation Coefficient	.352 ⁺	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.038	.
		N	35	35

Table 12. Correlations between linguistic intelligence and English grammar knowledge

			Linguistic Intelligence	English Grammar knowledge
Spearman's rho	Linguistic Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.352 [*]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.038
		N	35	35
	English Grammar knowledge	Correlation Coefficient	.352 [*]	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.038	.
		N	35	35

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Finally, the third null hypothesis is rejected, i.e. there is a significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and L1/L2 grammar knowledge.

4. Hypothesis Four: There is no Relationship between Age and L1/L2 Grammar Knowledge.

4.1. Statistical information of age

Frequencies were run to get primary statistical information about the age of participants: the minimum age is 20 and the maximum age=30. So, the range equals 10 (30-20). The mean was 21.97, the median=22, and the mode=21. So, the most frequent age is 21 (with 9 frequencies) which its cumulative frequency is 48.6%, i.e. about 48 percent of participants are 21 or younger than 21. It is shown in Table 13 and 14.

Table 13. Statistical information of age

N Valid	35
Missing	0
Mean	21.9714
Median	22.0000
Mode	21.00
Range	10.00
Minimum	20.00

Maximum	30.00
---------	-------

Table 14. Statistical information of age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 20.00	8	22.9	22.9	22.9
21.00	9	25.7	25.7	48.6
22.00	8	22.9	22.9	71.4
23.00	4	11.4	11.4	82.9
24.00	3	8.6	8.6	91.4
25.00	2	5.7	5.7	97.1
30.00	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	35	100.0	100.0	

4.2. Testing hypothesis 4

After violating the normality of the participants' age, it is concluded that age does not have any significant role in this study, because almost all of the participants are in the same age, around 21). So, *there is no significant relationship between participants' age and their L1/L2 grammar knowledge.*

5. Hypothesis Five: Males and Females are not Significantly Different in their L1/L2 Grammar Knowledge.

Two different non-parametric 2 Independent Samples Tests were run in order for investigating:

- 1- Males and females difference in Farsi grammar knowledge
- 2- Males and females difference in English grammar knowledge

5.1. Males and females difference in Farsi grammar knowledge

A non-parametric 2 Independent Samples Test was run to compare the males' and females' Farsi grammar knowledge scores mean rank. It was concluded that *there is no significant*

difference between males and females in Farsi grammar knowledge at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) (Tables 15, 16).

Table 15. Ranks

	gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Farsi Grammar Knowledge	male	16	20.31	325.00
	female	19	16.05	305.00
	Total	35		

Table 16. Two Independent Samples Test
 Males and females difference in Farsi grammar
 knowledge

	Farsi Grammar Knowledge
Mann-Whitney U	115.000
Wilcoxon W	305.000
Z	-1.240
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.215
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.230 ^a

- a. Not corrected for ties.
 b. Grouping Variable: gender

5.2. Males and females difference in English grammar knowledge

Another non-parametric 2 Independent Samples Test was run to compare the males' and females' English grammar knowledge scores mean rank. It was concluded that *there is no significant difference between males and females in English grammar knowledge at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) (Tables 17, 18).*

Table 17. Ranks

	gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
English Grammar knowledge	male	16	17.06	273.00
	female	19	18.79	357.00
	Total	35		

18. Two Independent Samples Test
Males and females difference in English grammar knowledge

	English Grammar knowledge
Mann-Whitney U	137.000
Wilcoxon W	273.000
Z	-.502
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.616
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.635 ^a

a. Not corrected for ties.

b. Grouping Variable: gender

IV. Conclusions

In this study it was specifically aimed to investigate the correlation between Farsi grammar knowledge and English grammar knowledge in relation to students' English language proficiency, age, gender, and linguistic intelligence.

Generally, without considering any other variables, Farsi grammar knowledge and English grammar knowledge were correlated with each other.

English language proficiency was correlated with neither English nor Farsi grammar knowledge in none of the groups, i.e. low and high proficient.

Linguistic intelligence was significantly correlated with both English and Farsi grammar knowledge.

Participants' age was not significantly correlated with either English or Farsi grammar knowledge.

Males and females were not significantly different with each other in either English or Farsi grammar knowledge.

Based on this study, the conclusions are:

- 1- According to Cummins's (1979) Developmental Interdependence hypothesis and Common Underlying Proficiency, it is concluded that Iranian learners' competence in their second language (English) grammar knowledge may be partly dependent on the level of competence already achieved in their first language (Farsi) grammar knowledge.

In other words, if Farsi grammar knowledge is improved, English grammar knowledge will improve, too. Based on the study, most of the students whose Farsi grammar knowledge is low, their English grammar knowledge is low, too. It is necessary to mention that it is not possible to generalize this conclusion to the population, because the sample was not normal.

Students are improved significantly after formal instruction, and that grammatical knowledge is a significant predictor of the students' readiness for the next course level (Yim, 1998). There is a strongly positive correlation between the knowledge of first language grammar and the second/foreign language learning (Cleary, 2004). But Grammar instruction is perceived by both students and teachers as necessary and effective, but not as something they enjoy doing (Jean & Simard, 2011).

- 2- Students can be high proficient in English without having high English grammar knowledge.
- 3- Linguistic intelligence positively influences on grammar learning in either English or Farsi, because both English and Farsi grammar knowledge are correlated with linguistic intelligence.
- 4- In this study, age, as a control variable, did not have any significant relationship with either English or Farsi grammar knowledge.
- 5- Based on the results, gender differences do not have any significant influence on either English or Farsi grammar knowledge, i.e. males and females did almost the same.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. A. Marzban, Dr. A. Kasaian, and Dr. Sh. Barimani for their invaluable assistance, guidance, and encouragement in completing this work.

I would also like to express my indebtedness to Dr. M. Afzali and Dr. M. Pirooz, my professors in University of Qom, for their essential help and assistance, especially Dr. M. Afzali who helped me collect the test data.

Also I owe special thanks to Dr. M. Asadi for his essential help and assistance.

I wholeheartedly thank all the participants for their honorable patience and cooperation during collecting the data.

Finally, I wish to sincerely thank my parents for their support.

References

- Cleary, C. (2004). . Knowing English Grammar--An Important Aid in Second Language Learning. *Babel*, 38(3), 30-34.
- Cummins, J. (1979). Linguistic interdependence and the educational development of bilingual children .*Review of educational research*, 221-251.
- Cummins, J. (1980). The cross-lingual dimensions of language proficiency: implications for bilingual education and the optimal age question. *TESOL Quarterly*, 175-187.
- Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books
- Jean, G., &Simard, D. (2011). Grammar Teaching and Learning in L2: Necessary, but Boring? *Foreign Language Annals*, 44(3), 467-494.
- Nazary, M. (2008). The role of L1 in L2 acquisition: Attitudes of Iranian university students. *Novitas-ROYAL*, 138-153.
- Parvaresh, V., &Nemati, M. (2008).Metadiscourse and Reading Comprehension: The Effects of Language and Proficiency. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 5(2), 220-239.
- Razmjoo, S.A. (2008). On the relationship between multiple intelligences and language proficiency. *The Reading Matrix*, 8, 155-174.
- Sadighi, F. (2010). Iranian English Major Students' L2 Grammar Development: Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 53-61.
- Yim, Y. (1998). *The Role of Grammar Instruction in an ESL Program*. California State University, Los Angeles: ERIC.